



# NEWS FROM NOAA

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Contact: Gail Krueger  
Gray's Reef NMS  
(912) 598-2438

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## **GRAY'S REEF SANCTUARY 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY FEATURED IN NOAA SANCTUARIES REPORT**

The 25th anniversary of the designation of Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary is one of the many accomplishments highlighted in the 2006 State of the Sanctuaries Report, an annual summary of the NOAA National Marine Sanctuary Program's most significant achievements.

"Scientific research and education play a vital role in management of the sanctuary," said Gray's Reef sanctuary Acting Superintendent Cathy Sakas. "The public has been involved in the protection of this marine resource from the beginning, and in 2006 the community joined the sanctuary in celebrating 25 years of sanctuary science, education, and conservation."

In addition to the 25th anniversary milestone, the report highlights other accomplishments that took place in Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary during the year. These include the discovery of a potentially new sponge species, habitat mapping, student workshops, marine debris cleanup and an ocean film festival.

The 2006 State of the Sanctuaries Report also details science, education, and resource protection accomplishments throughout the sanctuary system, including establishing the world's largest area of marine protection in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands and shifting shipping lanes to reduce the risks of ship strikes to endangered whales in Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary.

"Our 2006 accomplishments reflect the significant progress being made by the National Marine Sanctuary Program to develop results-oriented resource protection, science, management and educational programs," said sanctuary program Director Daniel J. Basta. "I am especially proud of our program's five years of hard work with our partners that resulted in the president establishing the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Marine National Monument."

Information on the Gray's Reef sanctuary accomplishments and more across the sanctuary system, including in-depth features, stunning images and videos, are available on the sanctuary program Web site at <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov> and at the Gray's Reef Web site as <http://graysreef.noaa.gov>

The NOAA National Marine Sanctuary Program, which manages Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, seeks to increase the public awareness of America's marine resources and maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration and educational programs. Today, the sanctuary program manages 13 national marine sanctuaries and one marine national monument that together

encompass more than 150,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is celebrating 200 years of science and service to the nation. From the establishment of the Survey of the Coast in 1807 by Thomas Jefferson to the formation of the Weather Bureau and the Commission of Fish and Fisheries in the 1870s, much of America's scientific heritage is rooted in NOAA.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and information service delivery for transportation, and by providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners, more than 60 countries and the European Commission to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.

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On the Web:

NOAA: <http://www.noaa.gov>

NOAA National Marine Sanctuary Program: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov>

NOAA Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary: <http://graysreef.noaa.gov>